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1806 and 1838 sixty separate appropriations aggregating \$6,821,246, were made for the Cumberland road alone, is made to speak forcibly of the general determination of the people to have internal improvements at national expense. Thus amusing incident and significant fact, both alike gleaned from researches in the original sources, jostle against each other. Some of the expected topics are crowded out and the literary style shows departure from the sober vein of conventional historical composition.

In brief, the book contains, first, a number of significant facts not before used; secondly, considerable excellent illustrative material; and thirdly, a general but pretty definite impression of the irresistible expansion of the American people.

Of minor criticisms two only can be mentioned here. One concerns the interpretation (not peculiar to Sparks) of Jefferson's recommendation that Congress should "do *sub silentio* what shall be found necessary" to complete the acquisition of Louisiana. It must be interpreted in the light of Jefferson's proposed solution of the impending dilemma: first, secure the transfer of the territory so that France, if she should repent of her bargain, as it was feared, should repent in vain; secondly let Congress and the people freely and soberly consider whether and how they will heal the *ultra vires* action of a "guardian" government, done "beyond the constitution." What Jefferson expected was a positive act of ratification, not a decision by default that there had been no action *ultra vires*. (Cf. *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Ford, VIII. 244-245, notes).

The illustration on p. 295 of "A Western Mission" suggests the inquiry whether these massive stone buildings erected at Nashota, Wisconsin, by the Protestant Episcopal Church for the education of the Indians, are a typical western mission, and whether the influence of the great home missionary societies, those excellent institutions through which the East subsidized the religious work on the Frontier, does not deserve a comprehensive treatment.

FREDERICK W. MOORE.

A Literary History of America. By BARRETT WENDELL, Professor of English at Harvard College. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1900. Pp. 574.)

READERS who are familiar with Professor Wendell's other books will open his *Literary History of America* with the expectation that, whatever else it may or may not be, it will be at least interesting and suggestive. They will not be disappointed. The book is readable from beginning to end, and its point of view is often novel and stimulating. In its total effect it differs essentially from any other work on the same subject.

Rightly to understand the book it is necessary, first of all, to get a clear idea of its purpose and method. It is not a complete, detailed history of American literature, and evidently is not intended to be. In Book

I., dealing with the seventeenth century, the literature of all but the New England colonies is dismissed with a word, and of the New England writers only Wigglesworth, Anne Bradstreet, and Cotton Mather receive specific treatment. In Book II., the only eighteenth-century authors who get more than passing mention are Edwards, Franklin, Dwight (whose longest poem, "The Conquest of Canaan," is not named), Trumbull, Barlow and Freneau. In the remaining four books, which fill nearly four hundred pages, although the principal writers of the nineteenth century are each discussed at some length, the biographical details are meagre and the writings are not examined or even named with any attempt at system or completeness. A rather capricious list of "Authorities and References" does something to make up for the lack elsewhere of bibliographical detail.

A complete history of American literature then, the book is not. It cannot be used as such; it should not be judged as such. Professor Wendell would probably say that he had no occasion to do again what has already been done by others, and indeed he seems to have made no special study of our colonial and Revolutionary literature or of the minor writers of the republic. What he has given us, instead, is a series of vivacious though rather sketchy essays upon the broad facts and tendencies of American literature, with special reference to the relation of that literature to English life and literature. The essays find their unity and novelty in a thesis which is maintained throughout the book, to-wit, that by reason of our "national inexperience," or the absence of "the struggling complexity of social and political forces in densely populated regions," Americans preserved for two centuries and more a good deal of the "spontaneity, enthusiasm, and versatility" of their Elizabethan ancestors while Englishmen during the same period were rapidly developing new types of national character. In this way Professor Wendell accounts for the fact that, in spite of fundamental unity of blood, language, law, and moral ideals, the two great divisions of the English-speaking race have become so distinct and at times have been so estranged. The Revolution, for instance, "sprang from a deep temperamental misunderstanding between the native English and their American compatriots;" "while under the influence of European conditions the English temperament had steadily altered from that of spontaneous, enthusiastic, versatile Elizabethans to that of stubborn, robust John Bull, the original American temper, born under Elizabeth herself, had never deeply changed." But our author does not forget that his chief business is with the literature. His constant method, therefore, is to sketch the salient features of English history and character in the century then under consideration, show that English literature of the period reflected the national temper, sketch American history and character in the same period, and then show that the differences (in kind, not in merit) between the two literatures were due to the persistence in America of an earlier type of Englishman. Thus he says of Cotton Mather's *Magnalia* that "it groups itself not with such work as Dryden's, but rather with such earlier work as that of Fuller or even of

Burton." Of the Revolutionary political pamphlets he says that although they "were phrased in the style of the eighteenth century," they "indicate in our country a kind of intellectual activity which in England had displayed itself most characteristically a hundred years earlier." And even in the case of writers so late as those of New England in the middle of the nineteenth century he maintains that "their spontaneous aptitude for idealism, their enthusiastic love for abstractions and for absolute truth, they had derived, too, from the Elizabethan Puritans whose traits they had hereditarily preserved."

The reader gets this thesis pretty well dinned into him before finishing the book; "national inexperience" and "Elizabethan spontaneity, enthusiasm, and versatility" become very familiar sounds in his ears—a little too familiar at last, so that he is set to wondering whether the iteration of a form of words is not being made to do duty for substantial proof; and one reader, at least, arose from his reading with the impression that although there is something in Professor Wendell's theory, and something worth emphasizing, yet that there is not so much in it as its propounder thinks. It over-states the Elizabethan qualities in the settlers of New England, and under-states their grimly Puritanic qualities. It exaggerates the similarity between the Elizabethans and the later Americans. In accounting for what similarity there was, it over-estimates the effect of heredity, and under-estimates the effect which climate, race-mixture, and social, economic, and political conditions may have had in developing spontaneity, enthusiasm, and versatility in individuals whose ancestors were not conspicuous for those Elizabethan qualities. It ignores the fact that in every generation there have been many Englishmen, particularly poets and men of letters, who were not of the John Bull type, and consequently it minimizes the effect of English literature, upon contemporary American literature. Lastly, the terms employed are necessarily so inexact, and the phenomena handled are so vast and complex, that the generalizations arrived at often do not admit of close application. In discussing the literature of the seventeenth century, for instance, Professor Wendell prudently omits to point out wherein the *Bay Psalm Book* and *The Day of Doom* exemplify Elizabethan spontaneity and versatility; enthusiasm they certainly show, but it is of the same grim kind that cut down the maypoles and closed the theatres. In the eighteenth century most of the pure literature, in verse and prose, is tamely imitative of Queen Anne models, not of Elizabethan. In his treatment of individual authors of the nineteenth century Professor Wendell is obliged to lay the emphasis upon their indebtedness to English eighteenth-century literature and to the European romanticism and idealism of their own day, although he returns to his theory in the Conclusion.

But the worth of the book does not depend wholly upon the truth of its central proposition. In connection with individual authors many remarks are made that are fresh and penetrating or at least suggestive. Much truth is happily summed up in these words: "Irving, imbued with nineteenth-century romantic temper, wrote in the classical style of the

century before; Bryant, writing in the simply luminous style of his own century, expressed a somewhat formal sentimentality which had hardly characterized vital work in England for fifty years." Bryant's nature-poetry, however, particularly its relation to Wordsworth's, does not receive adequate treatment. Professor Wendell pierces close to the centre of the peculiar genius of Poe: "He had almost in perfection a power more frequently shown by skillful melodramatic actors than by men of letters—the power of assuming an intensely unreal mood and of so setting it forth as to make us for the moment share it unresistingly." The historical perspective in the following statement is illuminating: "The Yankee lecturers, of whom Emerson was the most eminent, were only half-secularized preachers—men who stood up and talked to ancestrally attentive audiences. . . . Emerson's essays, in short, prove to be an obvious development from the endless sermons with which for generations his ancestors had regaled the New England fathers." Professor Wendell's personal acquaintance with Lowell no doubt helped him to the insight here expressed: "One can feel in his literary temper two constant, antagonistic phases. His purity of taste was quite equal to Longfellow's; particularly as he grew older, he eagerly delighted in those phases of literature which are excellent. Yet all the while he was incessantly impelled to whimsical extravagance of thought, feeling, and utterance." Original and striking, although not quite satisfying, is the likening of Holmes to Voltaire. Wholly just and admirable is the frequent insistence upon two general characteristics of American literature in the nineteenth century: its instinctive moral purity; and its artistic conscience in matters of form, instead of the careless exuberance which might popularly be expected of literature in a young democracy. The forecast that "newspaper humor, the short stories of the magazines, and the popular stage seem the sources from which a characteristic American literature is most likely to spring," is at least not commonplace or superficial.

The ungracious task of mentioning certain positive faults may be performed rapidly. There are a good many errors, some of them hardly excusable, in matters of fact. What are now the concluding lines of "Thanatopsis" were not written when Bryant was seventeen but several years later; yet the date here (p. 197) is a part of the argument. Poe (p. 205) at the time of his death was certainly on the way North after visiting his betrothed; he was not left "in the gutter" but in a rumshop; he did not "find" his way to the hospital but was taken there by an old friend. Whitman did not ramble about the country "much like those half-criminal wanderers whom we now call tramps" (p. 465); he went as a printer and journalist. John Esten Cooke's novel, *The Virginia Comedians* is referred to as "A Virginia Comedy" (p. 487), and the next sentence seems to distinguish it from "certain romances connected with his native state." Professor Wendell's style has a certain spontaneous vitality and freedom, but lacks conciseness, evenness and distinction; "admirable," "once for all," "then," and "of course" are used so often that they become mannerisms. Statements, sometimes relatively unim-

portant ones, are carelessly repeated. The facetious passages are often cheap and clumsy and quite unworthy of the general level of the work. In general the form of the book is not sufficiently removed from that of the class-room lectures in which it first existed. It is unfortunate that in the many references to the social status of authors Professor Wendell has not always made it manifest that he mentions this matter merely for what light it may throw on the historical development of the literature, and not as a matter of any intrinsic consequence in that republic of letters where a palace is nothing, and a garret is nothing, but only the gift of genius from the Almighty.

After all has been said by way of adverse criticism, the fact remains that this *Literary History of America* is a fresh and original piece of work. It will doubtless strike some as cold and unsympathetic. But there is no need that all literary criticism should be emotionally sympathetic; it is even better that some should not be. There is, besides, such a thing as intellectual sympathy, and that is what we have here. The book as a whole is not rapturous and is not meant to be; in the case of several authors it is apparent, furthermore, that the historian does not find them especially congenial; but he is sincerely interested in the intellectual problems of American literature, particularly in the relations of it to the historical development of the entire English-speaking race. These problems are legitimate and interesting; and the book is so well done that it provokes the wish that in certain respects it had been done somewhat better.

WALTER C. BRONSON.

History and General Description of New France. By Rev. P. F. X. DE CHARLEVOIX, S.J. Translated from the Original Edition and edited with Notes by Dr. JOHN GILMARY SHEA, with a new Memoir and Bibliography of the Translator by Noah Farnham Morrison. In six volumes. Vol. I. (New York: Francis P. Harper. 1900. Pp. 286.)

ANYTHING relating to the Jesuits in North America finds favor just now with the publishers. The great edition of the *Relations* is about completed and this re-issue of Charlevoix is obviously intended to be placed side by side with the magnificent monument which Mr. Thwaites has reared for himself as editor. The edition, like that of the *Relations*, is limited to seven hundred and fifty copies. It may perhaps be doubted whether the work of the Jesuits is not in danger of being unduly magnified. Yet the historical student is not the one to complain of excess of light.

Charlevoix was pre-eminently the scholarly Jesuit of the first half of the eighteenth century. In 1720 he was sent out to New France to inspect the Jesuit missions. He went through the interior of the country, and then down the Mississippi to its mouth. He also visited San Domingo. About two years he thus spent in America, and in 1722 he re-